

CLAIMS:

1. A process for preparing organohalosilanes comprising the steps of charging a reactor with a contact mass containing metallic silicon particles and a copper catalyst, and introducing an organohalide-containing gas feed into the reactor to effect reaction to form organohalosilanes, characterized in that
the partial pressure of organohalide gas in the gas feed is manipulated so as to keep a substantially constant temperature within the reactor.
2. The process of claim 1 wherein the partial pressure of organohalide gas in the gas feed is manipulated by adjusting the feed rate of organohalide gas in the gas feed to the reactor.
3. The process of claim 1 wherein the gas feed contains the organohalide gas and an inert gas, and the inert gas and unreacted organohalide gas exiting the reactor are recycled to the reactor.
4. The process of claim 3 wherein the gas feed is maintained at a constant flow velocity through the reactor, and the partial pressure of organohalide gas in the gas feed is manipulated by adjusting the ratio of the recycle gas to fresh organohalide gas.
5. The process of claim 3 wherein the inert gas is nitrogen gas.
6. The process of claim 1 wherein the gas feed to the reactor contains the organohalide gas in a concentration of 15 to 70% by weight.